

FAMILY LIFE

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Edited by Paul Popenoe

Parents Without Partners

Each year half a million parents of children still young enough to need parental care are deprived of partners through divorce, separation, or death. The problems of these children deserve much more attention than they are getting; but the parents themselves, who have become "parents without partners," are even more neglected by the public, and it is only in quite recent times that organized attempts are being made to supply them with help along the many lines where help is needed.

A beginning was made more than 20 years ago when a Chicago attorney established an informal group of Divorcees Anonymous, patterned after the large and influential Alcoholics Anonymous. The group spread to other parts of the country and is still in existence. Information concerning this organization may be had from Sam Starr, 188 W. Randolph st., Chicago, Ill. Some of the "locals" thought of themselves as concerned with counseling, others have limited themselves mainly to providing a social life for the members.

Little has been done in the United States to organize those who lost their

partners through death. In England, three or four years ago, widows got together in a "Cruse Club" for their own benefit, and this has spread and assumed more functions from month to month. Chairman of the parent organization is Mrs. Margaret Torrie, The Charter House, Lion Gate Gardens, Richmond, Surrey, England. Great care is being taken to see that new "locals" are set up only with proper supervision and with the participation of qualified and experienced persons. The Cruse Club helps widows understand their rights and responsibilities, find places for themselves in community life, broaden their social acquaintance and enjoy appropriate recreation, and in general aids them to enrich their lives in every feasible way. The existence of children is not forgotten—"parents circles" meet regularly; but the average widow is likely to be in an older age group.

The American Institute of Family Relations has from its founding, 32 years ago, provided help to thousands of men and women whose homes have been broken by death, divorce, or separation. In recent years it has offered frequent and very successful classes or

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discussion groups with title, "New horizons for the widowed and divorced." Detailed program of such a group may be had on request to the Institute. It has also taken an active part in encouraging such groups as Divorcees Anonymous and, more recently, Parents without Partners.

The latter organization dates back five or six years to the establishment of a nucleus in New York City. It has spread to half a hundred "locals" in various parts of the country, all loosely federated in the national, headquarters of which are at 80 Fifth ave., New York 11, N.Y. A description of its founding and activities is given in a new book, *Parents Without Partners*, by Jim Egleson and Janet Frank Egleson (Pp. 249, price \$4.50 from E. P. Dutton & Co., 300 Park avenue South, New York 10, N.Y., 1961.) Mr. Egleson was a co-founder and the first president of the organization in which he met his present wife, who was also a divorcee. But the description of this organization forms only a very small part of the book, the whole of which is a sensible, practical, and interesting discussion of the subject. The subtitle, "a guide for divorced, widowed, or separated parents," is accurate; but in addition it should be extremely useful to all counselors, especially clergymen, who are consulted by persons greatly in need of help. Out of their own experience and that of their associates,

the authors go directly to the points at which real trouble most frequently arises.

One of these, a source of almost unlimited conflict, with resulting damage to children, is the matter of "visitation rights." Almost as a matter of routine, the mother gets custody of the children, but the father has the legal privilege of seeing them at certain times, and the authors emphasize, over and over again, the great desirability of keeping him in the children's lives as a real and wholesome factor. (Incidentally, they discourage emphatically the practice of many disgruntled divorcees of explaining the break-up to the offspring by asserting that "father is mentally sick"!) They give detailed suggestions to fathers, who are not usually remembered by other writers on this subject:

1. Try to arrange visits so that your children are with you overnight or longer.
2. If it is at all possible, have your children visit you in your own home.
3. In any case, try not to visit your children in your former wife's home.
4. Wherever you live, if it is at all possible, set aside a separate room for the children—a room they will know is theirs, a place that is always waiting for them when they arrive.
5. Learn to cook (if you don't know how) and eat most of your meals together at home.
6. Plan activities that you and your children can participate in together.
7. Don't be afraid to assign chores.
8. Take an active part in your child's school and church life and in matters that affect his health.
9. Develop a social life that includes

your children. Invite other adults and children to participate in some part of your visiting-day plans.

10. Develop holiday and vacation traditions with your children.

11. Keep your promises!

12. Encourage your children to talk things over with you, in a normal way, but be careful not to encourage them to take sides against the other parent.

Naturally, such a program requires effective cooperation, or at least passive acceptance, by the mother, which would not always be forthcoming.

Bereavement by death creates somewhat different problems from those that follow a legal separation. "While the big problem facing divorced or separated parents is how to get along *with* an ex-spouse, the chief concern of widows and widowers is how to get along *without one*." This has led to the belief that the two groups need separate organizations, an idea bolstered by the fact that women widowed by death often feel themselves to be in a different category,—to have higher social or moral status, so to speak,—than those widowed by law. In practice this does not seem to have been a serious handicap to organizations in this country.

A good chapter discusses "Single-parent children: how they feel," emphasizing the inevitable bad effects on the offspring and discussing ways in which they can be minimized. Here as elsewhere their points are documented by innumerable thumbnail sketches from life.

Remarriage is urged, but not too quickly (not merely because marriage on the rebound is notoriously dan-

gerous, but because the children need more time than is often realized, to adjust themselves.) In any event, they urge counseling as a preliminary to taking another trip to the altar—or to the justice of peace. "The three most important factors that you can bring to remarriage, according to professional opinion, are a realistic evaluation of the past, a mature approach to the future, and self-understanding." As they gathered material for the book and interviewed persons involved, the authors say that three observations cropped up over and over again: (1) most of the single parents we talked with had, at some point, turned to a form of counseling or therapy; (2) without exception, all those who had counseling or therapy declared that the experience was helpful to them; and (3) an overwhelming proportion of those who did not have counseling or therapy felt that it could have aided them through most troublesome situations and were considering the possibility of seeking such help in the future."

Around the World

MUSEO SOCIAL ARGENTINO has just celebrated its 50th anniversary. This "Institute of information, studies, and social action" is much more than its name indicates; it has promoted many conferences and local organizations, and established a university (in 1930) which offers a broad education particularly in the field of social action and social work. A dozen sections of the Museum deal with such matters as cooperatives, public health, juvenile delinquency, women's work, penology, and eugenics. Address of the head-

quarters is Corrientes 1723, Buenos Aires, Argentina.

PAKISTAN has adopted an ordinance severely limiting polygamy, which has always been accepted in countries under Muslim law. Arbitration councils are established which must approve a man's decision to take an additional wife. If he does so without the council's permission, he can be imprisoned for a year and his first wife can sue for divorce. Even with permission, he must immediately return the full dowry to his earlier wife or wives, or it will be deducted from his income. Minimum age of marriage for girls is raised from 14 to 16.

MARRIAGE CERTIFICATES, plastic-covered and made to fit the wallet, can now be had from the vital statistics division of Saskatchewan, Canada. Thus a man or woman may be easily able to produce, whenever called on, the evidence of matrimony just as the automobile license is also ready for convenient showing.

MARRIAGES on a 50-50 basis, with recognition of equal rights of the partners, amount to 72% of all marriages in Western Germany, according to a recent research. However, only 32% were indicated as representing a genuine division of authority, while in 26% the man was thought to have greater influence in decisions, in 14% the woman.

MALTA, although a small island, has taken an active interest in marriage counseling, with the establishment of a counseling center four years ago. Last year 300 persons were counseled, most of them over a period of at least several weeks.

PLANNING FOR MARRIAGE COUNSELING even before the marriage is solemn-

ized is the program of Rev. Albert Maber, an English minister in the small town of Purbook. Immediately after the wedding he takes motion pictures of the couple at their happiest. If the couple later have difficulties he invites them to his home and shows them these pictures. "At the end of such an evening they always go away happier. More often than not they leave hand in hand," he declares. Since beginning this project the minister has shot about 3,000 feet of 16 mm. film each year.

ELEVENTH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE of Social Work will be held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, Aug. 19-25, 1962. Nine official study tours are planned in connection with it; details may be had U.S. Committee, Natl. Conference on Social Welfare, 22 W. Gay st., Columbus 15, Ohio.

IN SWEDEN, every seventh marriage ends in divorce, and the government is making determined efforts to improve this situation. Alcoholism of one partner or the other is the ground on which divorce is sought in one case out of every four. A one year delay, the equivalent of an interlocutory period, is imposed before a final divorce decree is granted; during that time their own attorneys as well as the judicial officers are expected to help both parties consider the situation carefully and see what a divorce is going to involve. More than 80% of all divorces are sought by the wife. Counseling services and pre-marital education are being spread steadily.—Michael Salzer in *Wien Arbeiter-Zeitung*, Aug. 29, 1961. ●

Educational Notes

CORRESPONDENCE COURSE in preparation for old age is now offered by

the University of Georgia under the title, *Anticipating your later years*. Prepared by Dr. Emeliza Swain, the course carries a \$25 fee which covers all material and instruction costs. For further information write to Miss Elizabeth Powell, Home Study Supervisor, Georgia Center for Continuing Education, University of Georgia, Athens, Ga.

FAMILY SERVICE ASSOCIATION of America has moved its hq. to 44 E. 23d st., New York 10, N.Y.

MARITAL ROLES INVENTORY is a new tool by Nathan Hurvitz, published by the Western Psychological Services, Box 775, Beverly Hills, Calif. It is intended to bring out differences between the concepts of husband and wife as to what their roles are in the home (or in pre-marital education, what they think their roles would be.) Wide differences between them, or between their own views and those generally accepted socially, indicate points at which difficulties may exist and re-education be needed.

ENJOYING MARRIAGE is the title of a course of 12 two-hour classes being presented at Clark College (Vancouver, Wash.) by Lyle H. Truax. It represents a constructive plan to help husbands and wives get more satisfaction from their marriages by identifying the behavior patterns that are in conflict, and substituting something more appropriate for them.

CLERGYMEN, to whom people are particularly likely to turn for help, are particularly unskilful in recognizing mental illness, according to a survey made by psychiatrist Bruce P. Dohrenwend of Columbia University. He submitted six serious case histories to a wide variety of community lead-

ers. Educators were best able to recognize real trouble; economic leaders were lowest. Religious leaders tended neither to judge mental illness correctly nor to recommend help from specialists when it was needed. The study was reported at the annual meeting of the American Psychological Association.

TWO NEW SOCIO-GUIDRAMAS have just appeared, as a help to public discussion of current problems. *Television versus Homework* is by Dr. Willa Norris of Michigan State University and *School—what for?* is by Dr. Buford Stefflre of the same institution. They present a topic in dramatic form, which a counsellor can then throw open for public, carefully informed discussion. Price of the complete set of either one is \$2.80 from OccuPress, 489 Fifth ave., New York 17, N.Y.

SEVERAL ORGANIZATIONS of former mental patients have appeared in recent years, for mutual support. Recovery, Inc., is one that has wide ramifications and its program is stated "to have done marvels in saving marriages and children." Details may be had at no cost, from Recovery Program World Wide Service, GPO Box 2260, New York 1, N.Y.

Research Notes

ASTHMA has long been considered by many psychoanalysts as associated with unhappy childhood and in particular, of the child's deprivation, or fear of deprivation, of mother love. Study of 71 asthmatic children at the Hawthorn Center for disturbed Children (Northville, Mich.) found no confirmation of this speculation. The subjects were divided into three groups—those with bad family adjustments,

good family adjustments, and in-between. No relation was found between the severity of the disease and the character of the family relationship.—*Journal of Pediatrics*, Sept., 1961.

CAFFEINE has been found to produce mutations in the germ cells of some lower organisms. No evidence is available as to whether this is also the case in human coffee and tea drinkers.

HOW MANY MARRIAGES occur when the bride is already pregnant? Several studies have shown that 20% of all first-born children appear less than nine months after the date of the wedding. Psychologist Horace Gray of the Santa Barbara, Calif., Mental Hygiene Clinic studied all marriages registered in one California county during a 26 month period. There were 294 first births recorded for the 907 brides. Of the babies, 2% were born before the wedding, 24% before 196 days after the marriage, 43% before 244 days after marriage, 55% before 252 days after the wedding, and 65% before 280 days (10 lunar months) after marriage.—*Journal of Psychology*, 1960.

FIVE MAJOR FACTORS in family life consist of problems related to (1) child rearing, (2) husband-wife relations, (3) style of life (socio-economic status), (4) community activity, and (5) religion. This is the finding in an analysis of 448 "normal families" in various parts of the U.S., made for the United Presbyterian Church by Orville G. Brim jr., Roy W. Fairchild, and Edgar F. Borgatta. Factor analysis revealed, somewhat surprisingly, that these factors were independent of one another; that is, differences in ideas of child rearing, or of religion, had no

connection with husband-wife relationships, and so on. A family with many problems will certainly be different from one that reports only a few problems, but "family problems are specific to roles and areas of activity."—*Marriage and Family Living*, Aug., 1961.

MONGOLOID GIRLS are almost invariably sterile. Survey of the world's literature by H. Forssman, O. Lehmann, and T. Torsten, found only seven who has borne children. These bore a total of eight children, of whom four were Mongoloids, four normal. —*American Journal of Mental Deficiency*, 1961.

TWO NEW TOOLS for teaching or research are offered by Family Life Publications, Inc., 6725 College Station, Durham, N.C. "A dating problems check list" will be useful particularly with high school students. More extensive is "A courtship analysis" (specimen set of either one is 35c) by Gelolo McHugh, intended to enable that "engaged couples and all other couples who are dating with thoughts of marriage can achieve a more realistic knowledge of the positive ways in which they relate to each other and an understanding acceptance of their differences in feelings and values."

Inexpensive Pamphlets

ENGAGEMENT: a guide for Catholic couples, by Irving de Blanc. Pp. 48, price 15c from Family Bureau, 1312 Massachusetts ave., NW., Washington 5, D.C.

MENTAL AFTERCARE — assignment for the sixties, by Emma Harrison. Pp. 28, price 25c from Public Affairs Pamphlets (No. 318), 22 E. 38th st., New York 16, N.Y.

NEW BOOKS IN BRIEF REVIEW

YOU CAN'T COUNT ON DYING, by Natalie Harris Cabot. Pp. 273 (no index), price \$3.95 from Houghton Mifflin Co., 2 Park st., Boston 7, Mass., 1961.

After obligatory retirement at age 65 or thereabouts you still have some of the best years of your life ahead of you, Mrs. Cabot reminds the reader. You can't count on dying; you'll have to live and might as well prepare yourself to live pleasantly and profitably; How do people do this? The Age Center of New England was founded in 1955 by Hugh Cabot of Harvard and Robert T. Monroe, a Boston gerontologist, and more than a thousand people have offered their life experience to a staff of trained researchers. These are summarized by Hugh Cabot's widow in a well-written book. Those whose lives were the richest were those who did not think of themselves as old. Most were living in a home of their own, in the city; virtually none of them wanted to move. They kept active, and disregarded the physical handicaps which they had. They not only took an interest in what was going on around them, but took a part in it. They showed a degree of stability and competence (emotional health) "rarely achieved by younger people." Amount of income had no relation to their satisfaction in life. But they inevitably felt the rejection which public opinion forces on them; the refusal of their volunteered services by organizations which were pleading hysterically for volunteers; the widespread determination of Society to segregate them; the "overprotection, too much respect, an

exaggerated admiration or politeness which held (them) at a distance, a conviction that the old were entirely different from themselves, all of these disguises for prejudice." Mrs. Cabot concludes this valuable survey by asking the reader to walk "through any downtown area in any American city or town. Will the old, we wonder, pass by you still as faceless people or will you see in them your personal future?"

THE MENTALLY DISTURBED TEACHER, by Joseph T. Shipley. Pp. 404, price \$5 from Chilton Books, Chestnut at 56th st., Philadelphia 39, Pa., 1961.

Sex offenders of various sorts, as well as kleptomaniacs, alcoholics, cheats and thieves, nervous incompetents, callous idlers, teachers who hate children and their own work: these are some of the malformed spirits who unfortunately may mold our youth, says Dr. Shipley, who taught for 43 years in a New York City high school. Norman Fenton, from surveys of all the teachers in several school systems, reported long ago that 22.5% of them were "maladjusted," many in need of psychiatric help. There is no reason to suppose that conditions in the profession have improved since then. Dr. Shipley discusses the various forms of maladjustment found among teachers (and likewise, of course, in other parts of the population!) and blames the difficulties partly on failure to select teachers properly, partly on unsatisfactory aspects of the teacher's daily experiences with supervisors and others. Even if the percentage of mentally dis-

turbed members were no larger in this profession than some others, it might well be argued that the effects are more damaging if the "subject" is teaching the nation's children. This book will focus attention on an unpleasant situation which need not be exaggerated but certainly should be met more effectively than at present.

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COUNSELLING AND SOCIAL WELFARE, by J. H. Wallis. Pp. 146 (no index), price 12 s, 6 d., from Rutledge & Kegan Paul, Broadway House, Carter Lane, London E/C.4, England, 1960.

Most social workers have actually had little training in the techniques of counseling, and Mr. Wallis has written this little book to put them in possession of practical methods which will enlarge their own professional usefulness. As Training Officer of the National Marriage Guidance Council in Great Britain, he has had a long and broad experience in this field. In the production of counsellors, he declares, "what matters is what kind of person the counsellor is." People may come from a variety of professional backgrounds or from none at all; "we do not find that either group is any more likely to have the characteristics required for counseling than is the other." Training is important, but it is not the whole story; and above all, it must be the right kind of training,—“the point is that training means learning to do something, and not learning about it.” The latter has its place but it is no guarantee of the former and may sometimes even stand in the way of it. This well-written, quite non-technical book gives a good picture of procedures used at the Marriage Guidance

Council, which now has something like a hundred branches in the Britain. A minor point may be mentioned: Mr. Wallis orders the counselor "Never get involved in trying to discuss personal issues by letter, only in an interview. Letters can have legal complications." Interviews can have legal complications, too; but the idea that counseling can not, must not, be attempted by correspondence has been shown by abundant experience in both Europe and America to be quite incorrect; and it is obvious that the major part of the population in any country will be deprived of any counseling at all, if it can never be given by mail. The fact is that quite different techniques of counseling are necessary in the latter case, and few counselors have recognized this and learned such techniques, but it is safe to say that counseling by letter will have a large and invaluable extension during the next generation everywhere, as already foreshadowed by the work of such organizations as the Istituto "La Casa" in Milan, the principal center of family counseling in Italy.

●

PREMARITAL INTERCOURSE AND PERSONAL RELATIONS, by Lester A. Kirkendall. Pp. 302, price \$7 from the Julian Press, 80 E. 11th st., New York 3, N.Y., 1961.

Questioning 200 college men about their sexual experiences (most of which had occurred during their high school days), Dr. Kirkendall brought together a collection of reports, the validity of which depends, of course, on the objectivity and honesty of the narrators, but which include many sordid, some tragic, episodes. They confirm the evidence from all other investigation in this field,

that the first sexual experience is very rarely due to any overwhelming biological urge. It is motivated by social influences—gang spirit, desire for adventure, desire to show himself that he was a man, fear of being thought “chicken,” and the like. When the female partner was the aggressor, it was often because she was of lower status and hoped to draw or force the man into a marriage that would be more advantageous to her than what she might otherwise achieve. Dr. Kirkendall (professor of family life, Oregon State University) attempts to arrange the experiences in a hierarchy of seriousness based on the degree of real affection involved. It is not easy to measure this, however! At best, it is too often a hedonistic judgement, and studies of this kind (several have been published during the last few years) are greatly in need of extension to the long-term results. The Kinsey study, for instance, found that a woman who has had premarital sexual experience is more likely to commit adultery after marriage. Virtually every study yet published has found that the most successful marriages are between persons, neither of whom has had previous experience of sexual intercourse. Dr. Kirkendall's study brings into very strong relief the failure of American culture to deal adequately with the whole problem of sexual ethics. It is all too obvious that most of the young men and young women involved in these 200 thumbnail sketches had no real education for human relations, had no sense of or recognition of any values in this field, and had never been given any training in self-mastery which is necessary to their future success in all walks of life and not merely

in their relationships with the other sex.

●
LOVE AND CONTROL: the contemporary problem, by Leon-Joseph Suenens. Pp. 200 (no index), price \$3.25 from the Newman Press, Westminster, Md., 1961.

Within the framework of Roman Catholic doctrine a Belgian bishop discusses the importance of control of the sex instinct, in marriage and out, addressing himself to all concerned with sex education. The subject is an important one and any reader will find something worthwhile in Dr. Suenens' comments, effectively translated from the French by George J. Robinson.

●
THE SCIENCE OF GENETICS, by Charlotte Auerbach. Pp. 272, price \$5.95 from Harper & Bros., 49 E. 33d st., New York 16, N.Y., 1961.

Genetics is not merely a study of the mechanism of heredity. It is concerned also with how changes arise and are utilized to direct the process of evolution, how sex is determined, how heredity and environment interact in jointly determining the kind of people we become. “It perhaps comes nearer to the mystery of life than any other science,” the author comments; “It has important applications to many other areas, such as medicine, agriculture, and education.”

It should therefore be a fundamental part of any real education, but it is greatly neglected, partly because it is frankly a difficult subject. This authoritative account of it by a competent writer, Dr. Auerbach of the University of Edinburgh, should be widely read.

●
TEEN GUIDE TO HOME MAKING, by Marion S. Barclay and Frances Champion. Pp. 517, price \$5.84 from Mc-

Graw-Hill Book Co., 330 W. 42d st., New York 36, N.Y., 1961.

Large, attractive, handsomely illustrated text book for high school pupils, which should also be of great value to girls' organizations and to families. Dr. Barclay is supervisor of homemaking education in Hillsborough Co., Fla.; Dr. Champion is Florida State Supervisor of Home Economics.

●
WOMAN TO WOMAN, by Katherine Burton. Pp. 217 (no index), price \$3.95 from P. J. Kenedy & Sons, New York 8, N.Y., 1961.

Selections from columns published in *The Sign*, a Roman Catholic magazine. Dr. Burton touches on "everything under the sun," always gracefully and thoughtfully.

●
THE PRECARIOUS VISION, by Peter L. Berger. Pp. 238 (no index), price \$3.95 from Doubleday & Co., Garden City, N.Y., 1961.

The assistant professor of social ethics at Hartford Theological Seminary offers a novel and provocative look at "social fictions and Christian faith."

●
CHRISTIAN ETHICS FOR PRACTICAL LIVING, by Horace E. Orr. Pp. 139 (no index), price \$3 from Westminster Press, Witherspoon bldg., Philadelphia 7, Pa., 1961.

The substance of lectures by the late professor of philosophy and religion at Maryville (Tenn.) College. About one-third of the total is given to problems of marriage and the family.

●
SUBNORMAL PERSONALITIES, by C. J. C. Earl. Pp. 338, price \$7 from

Williams & Wilkins, Baltimore, Md., 1961.

Posthumous work of an English psychiatrist which, if taken to heart, "should lead to a revolution in our methods of handling subnormal children and preparing them for more effective life in the community," according to the introduction by Kenneth Soddy. The book will naturally be of interest primarily to specialists.

●
RETIREMENT VILLAGES, ed. by Ernest W. Burgess. Pp. 161 (paper covers), price \$3.50 from Division of Gerontology, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Mich., 1961.

With the spread, slowly but steadily, of retirement villages in many parts of the nation, particularly in the warmer states, and with the increasing number of retirees, a careful study of these villages was well worth while. The 16 papers brought together in this book were presented at a meeting of the American Society of the Aged last year. They will serve as a guide in further developments of these facilities for Senior Citizens, and as a great source of information and stimulus to thought on the part of business, industry, labor unions, religious organizations, and commercial enterprises that have gone into this field of housing and encountered many new questions that still have to be answered.

●
FAMILY CLOTHING, by Mildred Thurow Tate and Oris Glisson. Pp. 412, price \$8.75 from John Wiley & Sons, 440 Park ave. South, New York 16, N.Y., 1961.

College textbook by two nationally-known home economists; but any homemaker could profit by it.

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